

**MINUTES
TOWN OF FORT MILL
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
October 27, 2015
112 Confederate Street
7:00 PM**

Present: James Traynor, Ben Hudgins, John Garver, Chris Wolfe, Tom Petty, Jay McMullen, Planning Director Joe Cronin, Assistant Planner Chris Pettit

Absent: Hynek Lettang

Guests: Larry Huntley (Town Council), Matt Mandle (ESP Associates), Matt Levesque (ESP Associates), Rick Porter (Gross Builders), Bryan Tuttle (Tuttle Co.), Sean Jones (Carolina Real Estate), Craig Otto (Holiday Inn Express), KC Udani (Holiday Inn Express), Steve LaCarter (Springfield), Charles Roseberry (Savannah Place), Laura Roseberry (Savannah Place), Patti Schmidt (Savannah Place), Alex Franks (Hensley Road), Kevin Burrell (Hensley Road)

Chairman Traynor called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Mr. McMullen made a motion to approve the minutes from the September 22, 2015, meeting, with a second by Mr. Wolfe. The minutes were approved by a vote of 6-0.

Planning Director Cronin stated that he had heard from Mr. Lettang, who would be unable to attend the meeting due to a prior work commitment.

OLD BUSINESS ITEMS

1. **Appearance Review: Traditions at Fort Mill:** Assistant Planner Pettit provided an overview of the request, the purpose of which was to review the crosswalk and lighting plans for the Traditions at Fort Mill senior apartment project, which were deferred from the previous meeting. Rick Porter of Gross Builders and Matt Levesque of ESP Associates provided additional information in support of the request.

Mr. Porter stated that he understood the rationale behind having stamped patterns in crosswalk areas; however, because this would be an age-restricted (55+) community, they were seeking to install smooth surfaces for the safety and accessibility of future residents. Gross Builders had no issue making the crosswalks a contrasting color, and would stamp the crosswalk along River Crossing Drive.

Mr. Petty made a motion to approve the installation of cast-in-place smooth concrete crosswalks on the interior parking lot (which will be shielded from the corridor right-of-way by apartment buildings) and a matching stamped concrete pattern for the crosswalk along River Crossing Drive. The colors of each crosswalk are to be consistent with the color of the building. The lighting plan is to be deferred until a standard has been adopted

for the overlay district. Mr. Hudgins seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0.

2. **Appearance Review: Holiday Inn Express:** Assistant Planner Pettit provided an overview of the request, the purpose of which was to review an updated appearance review request from Navkaar Investment Corporation for a proposed Holiday Inn Express to be located at 1655 Carolina Place Drive. Assistant Planner Pettit stated that the applicant had incorporated the revisions recommended by the Planning Commission at the last meeting, and included elevations for all four sides of the building. Craig Otto and KC Udani provided additional information on behalf of the applicant. The most significant change was the inclusion of brick and cultured stone on the ground floor of the building.

Following a brief discussion, Mr. Hudgins made a motion to approve the design as amended. Mr. Wolfe seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a vote of 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS

1. **Annexation Request: Patterson Property:** Planning Director Cronin stated that the property owners had submitted an annexation application for four parcels containing a total of 8.1 acres (previously listed as 7.85 acres, but since re-surveyed at 8.1 acres) located at 1122 Hensley Road. The parcels are immediately adjacent to the Savannah Place subdivision, and across Hensley Road from the Friendfield subdivision. The applicants requested a zoning designation of R-5 Residential upon annexation.

Planning Director Cronin stated that the parcels were located in an area designated on the town's future land use map as "medium density residential," with a recommended density of 3-5 dwelling units per acre. Planning Director Cronin added that the R-5 district would allow a maximum of 3 DUA by right, for a maximum of 24 single-family lots. Given the small size of the property, staff felt that the traffic impact would be negligible. Staff recommended in favor of the annexation request with a zoning designation of R-5.

Bryan Tuttle of the Tuttle Co. provided additional information on behalf of the applicants. He also presented a concept plan showing how the property may be developed in the future.

Chairman Traynor asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak in regards to the application. Patti Schmidt of the Savannah Place subdivision asked how the buffers would be applied. Planning Director Cronin stated that the R-5 district requires a 35' buffer along the perimeter of the property. Buffers typically remain natural, but a replanted buffer may be provided if a portion of the buffer area must be cleared and graded. The size of the buffer may also be reduced if a wall or fence is provided along the property line. Charles Roseberry, also a resident of Savannah Place, asked where the utilities would connect. Planning Director Cronin answered that the developer would need run all connections, and would be responsible for acquiring any easements, if necessary. Mr. Tuttle added that water was available on Hensley Road, and sewer plans were still being evaluated. Ms. Schmidt also stated that she was not opposed to the request, as anything on that site would be better than what is there today.

Mr. McMullen asked what portion of the 20% open space requirement was included in the buffer areas. Mr. Tuttle did not have a specific percentage, but did note that there was an existing pond on the site which could be amenitized as usable open space. Mr. Wolfe added that he would like to see more usable open space within the project if R-5 zoning was approved. Planning Director Cronin reminded commission members that the layout was only conceptual, and not a part of the annexation and zoning request. Those items would typically be addressed during the platting process. Mr. Wolfe also expressed concerns about the consistency of smaller lots when most of the surrounding properties were zoned for lower density. He asked staff if they knew the overall density of the neighboring communities. Planning Director Cronin stated that they did not have it off hand, but could obtain that information.

*NOTE: Savannah Place (R-15, Town): 45 lots on 18.0 +/- acres = 2.50 DUA;
Friendfield (R-15, Town): 43 lots on 24.0 +/- acres = 1.79 DUA;
Heritage Court (RC-I, County): 20 lots on 18.7 +/- acres = 1.07 DUA;
McKendry (R-10, Town): 61 lots on 25.3 +/- acres = 2.41 DUA
Stirling Heights (R-10, Town): 31 lots on 13.2 +/- acres = 2.35 DUA*

Chairman Traynor asked if the applicants had met with neighboring property owners. Mr. Tuttle stated that they had not, but would be willing to do so. Chairman Traynor recommended deferring the request for one month to allow for a meeting to take place, which was agreeable to the applicant.

Mr. Petty made a motion to defer consideration of the request so that the applicant could have time to meet with surrounding property owners. Mr. Garver seconded the motion. The motion to defer was approved by a vote of 6-0.

2. **Appearance Review: Academy Street Shell Building:** Assistant Planner Pettit provided an overview of the request, the purpose of which was to consider an appearance review for Decker National's proposed commercial office building located at 120 Academy Street. The building was designed with a full brick wrap, metal awnings, and a parapet along the front façade. To comply with the town's ordinances regarding parking and vehicular areas, the building was situated along the left property line, with the driveway and parking areas screened from the neighboring residence. Staff recommended in favor of approval.

Chairman Traynor asked about the operating garage doors on the front of the building, and expressed concern that the doors were out of character with the remainder of the downtown area. Sean Jones of Carolina Real Estate responded on behalf of the applicant. Mr. Jones stated that the doors were included as a design element that would allow a significant amount of light into the building. If a restaurant or other use was located in the building, the doors could also be opened. Mr. Wolfe asked whether there was already a tenant in place, or if the building was a spec building. Mr. Jones stated that it was a spec building. Mr. Petty asked whether the HVAC units would be mounted on the roof or on the ground. Mr. Jones stated that he was unsure of their exact location. Mr. Hudgins asked whether the site plan met the town's parking requirements. Assistant Planner stated that since the

property is in the downtown area, up to 50% of the parking spaces may be accounted for off-site. Planning Director Cronin added that Decker National also owns the neighboring plaza, which could likely be used for overflow parking, if needed.

Mr. Petty made a motion to approve the building design, contingent upon the proper screening of HVAC units. Mr. Hudgins seconded the motion. The vote was as follows:

<u>In Favor of the Motion</u>	<u>Opposed to the Motion</u>
Petty	Traynor
Hudgins	Wolfe
	Garver
	McMullen

The motion failed by a vote of 4-2.

Chairman Traynor stated that the primary concern of the majority was with the garage doors at the front and rear of the building, and that the remainder of the building was acceptable as presented. He invited the applicant to bring back a revised drawing in November for subsequent consideration.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION / DISCUSSION

- COD / COD-N Lighting, Crosswalk, Fence & Retaining Wall Standards:** Planning Director Cronin and Assistant Planner Pettit discussed a variety of options for standardizing lighting, crosswalk, fencing and retaining wall standards throughout the bypass corridor. The consensus of the commission was in favor of colored precast concrete pavers (with contrasting edging/border) for crosswalks within development nodes; various options for retaining walls depending on the overall height and location; black aluminum fencing accented by brick or stone columns; and “Baxter” style acorn lighting fixtures along pedestrian pathways within the nodes. Assistant Planner stated that acorn style fixtures may cause issues with SCDOT regarding light spill onto major roadways. Staff will be in contact with Mr. Petty to discuss design specifics, as well as utility providers (York Electric and Duke) and SCDOT, to further refine the recommended designs. Staff would also recommend consideration of a subcommittee to review and provide recommendations on the draft design standards before making a presentation to the full Planning Commission.
- Subdivision Plat Updates:** Planning Director Cronin informed the Planning Commission that staff had reviewed and approved final plats for the following subdivisions: Masons Bend Phase 1, Map 1, and Masons Bend Phase 1A, Map 1, containing a total of 141 single-family lots. In addition, staff noted that the new traffic circle has been partially opened to traffic on Sutton Road near the entrance to Masons Bend.
- UDO Advisory Committee Meeting Dates:** Planning Director Cronin stated that the next meeting dates for the UDO Advisory Committee were scheduled for Wed. November 18th and Thu. November 19th. The meetings will take place in the Spratt Building beginning at

6:30 pm. Staff will send out a reminder for all committee members to submit their comments on draft ordinance sections at least one week in advance of the meeting date.

4. **Joint Training Session for Planning & Zoning Officials**: Planning Director Cronin reminded members of the upcoming training session on Thu. October 29th at 6:30 pm in the Spratt Building. The topic will be regional planning, and the role that MPO's and COG's play at the regional level.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Joe Cronin
Planning Director